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SUBJECT: ELECTIONS CANADA CHIEF ON UPCOMING ELECTIONS IN
HAITI

1. (SBU) Head of Elections Canada Jean-Pierre Kingsley called the Embassy November 7 to debrief us on his recent trip to Haiti. He had met with Ambassador Wilkins just before his trip.

2. (SBU) Overall Kingsley said he came away optimistic and confident. He had a good deal of time with the head of Haiti's electoral council, Jean Bernard, with whom he discussed very practical, concrete issues. Kingsley thinks it is still possible to maintain the December date for the elections, while acknowledging that the council needs to do a few things before then. Specifically, he thinks there is adequate time to complete the required training before the December date.

3. (SBU) Kingsley noted several concrete actions that still need to be completed. First, the conditions for nationality for candidates need to be set before any list of candidates is developed. Second, Bernard needs to be empowered as CEO of the electoral council in order to make decisions which need to be made quickly. Third, electoral organizations should be started from the basis of reaching the most rural inaccessible areas first. Fourth, the media should be told in advance how the results will be flowing in so as to avoid accusations of holding back results. Finally, as the credibility of the election will depend on the production of voting cards, which he appreciates has slowed the process down, Kingsley urges the search for workable alternatives, such as use of receipts from registration which would allow people to vote.

4. (SBU) Kingsley said the registration seems to have gone well and while some may have complaints about not being able to register, signing up 3.4 million voters is a major achievement. He was pleased with the collaboration of the OAS, Minusta and the electoral council, as evidenced by a group going to Mexico to look into alternatives for the voter card. Kingsley closed by saying he has left open his availability for a return trip, and would certainly be willing to provide more support. Much depended on whether he himself would be organizing an election in Canada.

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WILKINS